



# MONOMOY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

## BIWEEKLY UPDATE



JULY 8 - JULY 20, 2017 [ISSUE 2]

Seals on South Monomoy. L. Rein

### A Message from Monomoy

Do you want to volunteer at Monomoy? We are always looking for volunteers to staff our Visitor Center, maintain trails, perform biological surveys and much more. We welcome all skills and time commitments.

We are planning a Monomoy beach cleanup trip on August 3rd and would love to have you as a volunteer! If you are interested in any volunteer opportunities, please contact us at 1 (508) 945-0594 or message us on Facebook!

### Monomoy Tales

*I participated in Chatham's Fourth of July parade with the Friends of Monomoy float. The theme was "The Holidays at Monomoy." I had a lot of fun being the jellyfish, swaying with the breeze and high-fiving kids. When I approached the crowd, both adults and kids pretended to get stung. It was great to see everyone having a good time. The best part was we won "Best Civic Organization" and received an award from the Chatham Board of Selectmen.*

*This parade is just one event/ one project of the Friends group. The Friends staff the Visitor Center, host summer talks, maintain the trails, and much more. I'm happy that I get to work with unbelievably passionate people who are always willing to lend a helping hand. I've learned so much from the volunteers and I can't wait to learn more from them the rest of the summer.*

- Tien Tran, Visitor Services Intern

### Monomoy Highlights

- Migrating shorebirds are beginning to pass through the area moving south for the season. Bird sightings include black bellied plovers, semipalmated sandpipers, least sandpipers and short-billed dowitchers.
- On July 14th, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and Monomoy wildlife biologist Kate Iaquinto responded to reports of entangled seals; one on South Beach and the other on South Monomoy. The crew successfully disentangled and released the first seal. Unfortunately, the second was found dead from wounds inflicted by the entanglement.

### COMMON TERN

Most chicks in the colony have hatched and many are currently beginning to fledge (learning to fly). Technicians are 'mass banding' the chicks with the intention of banding 1000 common tern chicks by the end of the season. The team continues to monitor productivity of nests by marking nests and eggs and monitoring chicks until they fledge.

### ROSEATE TERN

Three more chicks have recently hatched. Roseate terns nest within the common tern colony, which protects the less aggressive roseates from predators. The biological team has counted 16 nests to date. In comparison, there were 14 total nests found last year. Most of the chicks have been banded and a couple have fledged.

### AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER

Several chicks fledged recently on Minimoy Island. Due to a high tide on North Monomoy, four nests were over-washed. Technicians observed two of these pairs rebuilding their nests.

### BLACK SKIMMER

We are closely monitoring the two black skimmer nests, our first in about five years. Two chicks have hatched in one nest and three unhatched eggs remain in the other.

### PIPING PLOVER

On July 15, staff placed a nano-tag on another adult piping plover to gather data on foraging habits and migration patterns. This brings the total to 25 nano-tagged piping plovers for the year. Currently, staff counted two nests with eggs, 22 chicks on the ground from 12 pairs, and 16 fledglings from 7 pairs.



A common tern chick sits in a productivity plot next to two unhatched eggs.

USFWS/ Amanda Adams



Melanie Howe

Two beach cleanup volunteers carry trash cans on their backs to help carry the large debris they found on the beach.

On July 10th, five volunteers traveled to South Monomoy Island to collect trash and clean up the beach. While the Monomoy Islands are federally designated wilderness areas, this does not stop trash from washing up on the beach in alarming amounts. Sea turtles, whales, and lots of other marine life often mistake plastic bags and balloons for food and ingest these items of trash regularly.

Volunteers walked south along the beach and picked up trash along a stretch of approximately 2.5 miles. These five volunteers removed 2 large trash barrels full of debris as well as 5 garbage bags from South Monomoy Island! Thanks to the Friends of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge and refuge volunteers for a fun and productive day.

Want to help the Refuge stay clean for our birds, turtles, seals and other wildlife? Come help out on our next Monomoy Beach Cleanup Day, scheduled for Thursday, August 3rd. Please contact [paige\\_crane@fws.gov](mailto:paige_crane@fws.gov) or send a message to our Facebook page for more information!



# Partner Highlight

On July 11th, the Friends of Monomoy, hosted their first event of their summer series: "Seals as Sentinels of Ocean and Human Health," with a Friends of Monomoy Board Member, Dr. Andrea Bogolmoni. Andrea is a Post Doctoral Fellow at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Over 75 people attended the event.

Bogolmoni traced the history of seals and humans in Cape Cod, outlining the shifts in scientific understanding from the 18th and 19th century seal bounties to the passage of the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act. After the passage of the Act, seals returned to Cape Cod, bringing the return of great white sharks. Next, Bogolmoni defined the "Boomerang Effect," which describes how human-induced changes to the environment (e.g. contaminants, climate change, etc.) will eventually harm humans in the future.



She connected the "Boomerang Effect" to the intimate relationship between humans and seals, calling seals a "sentinel species," species that are indicators of environmental health. Working with the Northwest Atlantic Seal Research Consortium (NASRC), a group of researchers and fishermen, Bogolmoni hopes to work towards a world where seals and humans can practically coexist.

## Visitor Services

### Monomoy Point Lighthouse Tour:

On July 16th, Paige Crane and a Friends of Monomoy volunteer, Elaine Abrams, led the first Monomoy Point Lighthouse tour of the season! Visitors learned about the history and biology of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge. We want to thank Monomoy Island Ferry for providing the tour transportation services!

From 1823-1923, Monomoy Point Lighthouse guided ships through the "Cape of Evil Bars." In 1988, the lighthouse was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The lighthouse has undergone several restorations and stands as a symbol of Monomoy's rich history. If you are interested in going on a future lighthouse tour, please contact us at 1 (508) 945-0594 or message us on Facebook!



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## Upcoming Events

Every Tuesday: 3:00-5:30pm

Chatham Farmer's Market

We will be talking about visitor and volunteer opportunities at the Refuge. Additionally, Friends of Monomoy will be selling items from their store!

Ocean State Job Lot

1652 Main St , Chatham, MA 02633

Every Friday, Saturday, Sunday : 10am, 1pm, 3pm

Guided Nature Walks

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

30 Wikis Way, Chatham, MA 02633

August 3

Monomoy Beach Cleanup Day

We are looking for volunteers for our next Beach Cleanup Day. If interested, please contact [paige\\_crane@fws.gov](mailto:paige_crane@fws.gov).

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FRIENDS OF MONOMOY SUMMER SERIES TALKS 2017

Chatham Community Center

702 Main Street, Chatham, MA 02633

July 26: 7pm

Owen Nichols, "Plotting a Course toward Mutual Trust and Understanding: Cape Cod Fishermen and Scientists Working Together for Sustainable Fisheries"